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The curtain has at last mercifully descended on the curious variety show presented by Congressman Joe Pool's Un-American Activities Subcommittee. Had the Subcommittee opened its show with the witnesses who concluded it in the past couple of days, it might have spared itself—and the House of Representatives—much humiliation and discomfiture. The string of disorderly college boys for whom it furnished a sounding board all last week was hardly capable of giving it information of any value on the legislation which it plans to send to the House. The final witnesses were indubitable experts, however. And to a man they condemned Mr. Pool's repressive bill.

Fred Burton Smith, general counsel of the Treasury Department, told the Subcommittee that the Pool bill was totally "unnecessary" because ample power existed under present laws to prevent delivery of any aid to the Vietcong or North Vietnam. Brig. Gen. William Berg, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Military Personnel, told the Subcommittee he had no evidence to indicate that military morale had been impaired in any way by antiwar protests and demonstrations. And, finally, Deputy Attorney General Ramsey Clark told the Subcommittee that its proposed law was a threat to constitutional rights of free expression and completely unneeded in the bargain.

Mr. Clark added a thought that the House of Representatives ought to ponder. "That such a tiny handful of people could secure so much attention in so vast a Nation by what has largely been eccentric behavior is in itself a cause for concern," he said.

Do you remember the old-time amateur nights in vaudeville—when the audience used to jeer a hopeless act into oblivion and the management, with a long hook extended from the wings, would pull the deflated actors off the stage? Hasn't the time come for the House of Representatives, in common sense and common decency, to give the hook to this HUAC farce?